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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 002239

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SUBJECT: READ OUT FROM JULY 01 MCNS

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Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C/REL MNF-I) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Maliki presided over the June 16 meeting of the Ministerial Committee for National Security, during which:

-- Maliki directed Acting Minister of Justice Dr. Safi al-Safi to convene a July 2 meeting to deal with all unresolved issues regarding the GOI-planned takeover of the Rusafa Rule of Law Complex on August 1. Both the Ambassador and General Petraeus expressed their frustration with the GOI's lack of progress on finalizing the transfer and stressed the Coalition would not extend its funding support beyond July 31.

-- Minister of Interior Bulani stressed that he expected all his "brothers" at the table to support the legitimate judicial process as it dealt with the case against the Minister of Culture Asad Hashimi. Deputy Prime Minister Zubai demanded an independent investigation because his party believed the raid on the Minister's house was unjust, and the signed confessions were made by witnesses under duress and subjected to torture.

-- Zubai said that Ameriya neighborhood of Baghdad was secure but that the residents were suffering from a shortage of basic goods and services. Maliki agreed and assured Zubai that he had directed the Minister of Trade to distribute food rations immediately. Maliki also said he had met with Ameriya leaders to discuss their concerns and thank them for their efforts to fight Al Qaeda.

-- Maliki directed all ministries to support the stabilization and reconstruction of Diyala. Commander in Chief Joint Forces General Babakir al-Zebari gave an operational update on Baqubah, concluding most of Baqubah was Al Qaeda-free. Minister of State for National Security Shirwan Waeli said that many Al Qaeda members had fled to Khalis. General Petraeus agreed that the enemy was fleeing into areas south toward Khan Bani Sad, north toward Khalis and Samarra, and east along the Diyala river valley, but stressed that the Coalition was tracking them down.

-- Petraeus provided an update on the surge offensive ongoing throughout Iraq against Al Qaeda, discussed the recent reductions in civilian casualties, and outlined his briefing plans on the malign actions by Quds Force, as well as Lebanese Hezbollah, in Iraq. He also discussed U.S. military successes in large-scale reconstruction.

-- Maliki said that, despite recent improvements, the Iraqi Security Forces in Samarra still suffered from inadequate

life support and protection. He also said he expected Bulani to rein in the National Police operating in Samarra. Maliki said the National Police had been accused of looting houses and lack of discipline. While Bulani defended his forces, Minister of Defense Abdul Qadir blamed National Police Commander Adnon Thabit for the problems in Samarra.

-- Deputy National Security Advisor Dr. Safa'a asked for the group's opinion of the proposed legislation he presented last week to create an overarching strategy for national intelligence. While Maliki supported the legislation in the frank discussion which ensued, he also directed that more time be provided the relevant stakeholders to review and comment on the draft. END SUMMARY.

ROL complex transfer

¶2. (C/REL MNF-I) Maliki directed A/Minister of Justice Dr. Safi al-Safi to convene a July 2 meeting to deal with all unresolved issues regarding the GOI-planned takeover of the Rusafa Rule of Law Complex on August 1. In addition to Safi, other participants are to include Minister of Interior Bulani, representatives from the Supreme Judicial Council, and members of the Economic Council. (Note: This meeting occurred with MNF-I officers present, and both sides reached a broad agreement to fund the complex using existing contractors through Foreign Military Sales until 31 Jul 07 at which point Iraqis would negotiate their own contracts for security and life support at the facility. End Note.)

¶3. (C/REL MNF-I) Noting that he had already transferred USD 50 million to the MOJ at the PM's request, Minister of Finance Bayan Jabr asked what remained outstanding for the ROL complex. Dr. Safi argued the problems were largely with taking over the contracts from the Coalition for operating the complex. He said they all needed to be reviewed to

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ensure they were in line with Iraqi law. Safi also said he was not clear whether the GOI could use Foreign Military Sales Case to fund the complex as proposed by MNF-I. Safi and others also wondered who would be in charge of the complex once it was transferred, given the operation involved three major entities, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, and the Supreme Judicial Council.

¶4. (C/REL MNF-I) Both the Ambassador and General Petraeus expressed their frustration with the GOI's lack of progress on finalizing the transfer and stressed the Coalition would not, under any circumstances, extend its funding support beyond July 31. The Ambassador said the complex was built by the Coalition; it was a vital pillar in the Iraqi judicial system, and now was the time for the Iraqis to take over responsibility for the complex. General Petraeus warned the Prime Minister that if the GOI fails to support this critical project because of mere "bureaucracy," he and the international community would find it difficult to defend the GOI's position that it is taking positive steps toward establishing rule of law in Iraq. Petraeus added that he found it tragic that "our soldiers and yours are dying out there to give you a chance to make this work and your bureaucracy is holding it up!"

Political interference in the Culture case

¶5. (C/REL MNF-I) Minister of Interior Bulani stressed that he expected all his "brothers" at the table to support the legitimate judicial processes as it dealt with the charges against Minister of Culture Asad Hashimi. He lamented the current political interference in the process, arguing that the arrest warrant against Hashimi came after a two year investigation and two signed witness statements. Deputy Prime Minister Zubai retorted that neither he nor his Iraqi Accordance Front condoned criminal or terrorist activity, but

neither do they support illegal judicial processes. Zubai went on to say the Iraqi Security Forces seemed to have improperly raided the Minister's house, and the Iraqi investigators relied on torture to obtain forced statements from the witnesses. Zubai demanded an independent investigation of the case. General Petraeus said he told Coalition forces and private security contractors not to intervene in the case.

Ameriya secure but needs government support

¶6. (C/REL MNF-I) Zubai said that reports from Ameriya indicate the Baghdad neighborhood was secure but that the residents were suffering from a shortage of basic goods and services. He said they especially needed fuel and food. The Prime Minister assured Zubai that he had directed the Minister of Trade to provide food rations to the area immediately and that he would speak to the Ministry of Oil about sending fuel into the area. Maliki also said that he had a pleasant meeting with leaders from Ameriya in which he discussed the importance of defeating Al Qaeda as well as to meet the residents' needs in order to maintain the calm. Bulani said he would ensure adequate security was provided for deliveries to be made to the neighborhood.

Diyala update

¶7. (C/REL MNF-I) Maliki directed all ministries to support the stabilization and reconstruction of Diyala. He said military operations had largely cleared the area and that the government must now follow through with immediate relief for the citizens and take measures to rebuild Baquba and its infrastructure. He said the Minister of Trade had already committed to sending 72 trucks of food with a promise for an additional 20. DPM Saleh supported Maliki's push, adding that in his recent meeting with the Diyala Governor and provincial council they requested one million dollars for development projects as well as immediate fuel deliveries. Minister of Defense Abdul Qadir and Bulani offered security assistance for any government convoys headed to the area. Petraeus said coalition forces also stood ready to provide security support.

¶8. (C/REL MNF-I) Commander in Chief Joint Forces General Babakir provided his weekly progress report on military successes against Al Qaeda in Baquba. Minister of State for National Security Waeli stressed that while the joint forces had succeeded in getting Al Qaeda out of Baquba, it was now relocating to Khalis. Waeli said the Iraqi Army should take immediate action against AQI in Khalis. General Petraeus

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agreed that AQI was pushing north to Khalis and east and south along the Diyala River Valley and noted there were still about 100-150 AQI members operating in western Baquba. The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction with the military's progress, noting "it looks like Diyala will be the finishing blow to AQI." He stressed, however, the importance of the military destroying the remaining pockets of AQI before they could establish new bases of support. General Petraeus assured Maliki that special and conventional forces were conducting operations against Al Qaeda every day and night throughout Iraq.

General Petraeus Security Update

¶9. (C/REL MNF-I) General Petraeus summarized military operations, discussed the recent trends in population security indicators, and outlined his briefing plans for the coming days. He said June metrics indicated a decrease in civilian casualties, VBIEDs, sectarian killings, and suicide attacks. He said that although the level of violence was still unacceptable, the numbers were coming down in these key

population security indicators. Describing an early morning operation conducted in Sadr City that killed 25 people, Petraeus said the Coalition had only responded when JAM members "fired on our soldiers" with small-arms fire, IEDs and RPGs. He stressed that no civilians were killed, despite claims to the contrary by some media outlets. Petraeus said that he will publicly brief the actions of Quds Force and Lebanese Hezbollah on Monday, July 2. Petraeus also plans to brief Maliki and any other interested Iraqi officials on the twenty-eight large scale development projects completed by the Army Corps of Engineers in the last two weeks. Saleh expressed frustration that the media only reported VBIEDs and did not cover the good news that comes from these kinds of reconstruction projects.

Samarra Update

¶10. (C/REL MNF-I) Maliki said that, despite recent improvements, the Iraqi Security Forces in Samarra still suffered from inadequate life support and protection. He urged Qadir and Bulani to continue to monitoring the situation and ensure more support is provided. Bulani said the Coalition transition team was most helpful and thanked Petraeus for the protection his forces had provided to the Sixth Brigade of the second National Police Division. Bulani urged his fellow ministers to contribute to the effort in Samarra by providing for the citizens' needs.

¶11. (C/REL MNF-I) Maliki said he was disappointed with the performance of the Sixth Brigade of the Second National Police Division in Samarra. He said that he was angered to hear that the police were looting homes and were overall ill-disciplined. He told Bulani that they "must be educated on how to deal with the people" and that leaders must supervise their forces. General Petraeus said the new commander of forces in Samarra, Major General Rashid, was a calming influence on the forces, but that he suffered from a shortage of officers. He agreed with Maliki that the brigade also suffered from disciplinary problems. Minister of Defense Qadir agreed with Petraeus' assessment but added that Samarra's previous National Police commander, Adnan Thabit, failed to provide the needed leadership and discipline. Bulani defended the brigade, arguing that the investigation showed that the second Samarra Shrine bombing was due to the militia-infiltrated local facility protection force.

Intelligence National Security Legislation

¶12. (C/REL MNF-I) Deputy National Security Advisor, Dr. Safa'a asked for an update on views concerning the legislation proposal he presented at the June 26 MCNS that would create an overarching strategy for national intelligence. This law, he reminded the group would not create a new intelligence organization. It would help to bring transparency and clarity of roles and responsibilities for all intelligence entities within the Iraqi government. The FM Zebari said the proposal needed close scrutiny in a separate forum with legal and intelligence experts. Saleh supported this assessment. Maliki said he advocated the proposed legislation, considering it "the constitution for intelligence." Maliki, however, directed that more time be provided the relevant stakeholders to review and comment on the draft.

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